

*The SEED · the SOIL
and the SOWER*



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The seed, the soil and the sower

THE SEED, THE SOIL
AND THE SOWER



By Margaret Slattery

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THE SEED, THE SOIL AND THE SOWER

BY
MARGARET SLATTERY



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THE SEED, THE SOIL
AND THE SOWER

THE SEED, THE SOIL AND THE SOWER

“A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite tender sky,
The rich, ripe tints of the cornfield,
The wild geese circling high.
And far over upland and lowland,
The charm of the goldenrod.
Some of us call it Autumn
And others call it,—God.”

I CALLED it God—reverently from
the depths of my soul, God, a majestic, creative personality, the source of all things, the beginning and the end, God speaking in the hush of that autumn hillside to me, one of the things He had made, and saying, “Look, listen and learn.”

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It was not hard to look, for it was a wondrous picture — apples in piles, shining in the sun; the last shocks of corn standing in long lines as if waiting like soldiers for the order to march; scattered clusters of grapes on the hillside vineyard and huge pumpkins lying in a row waiting for the man driving slowly over the field to claim them. On the rocks beside me a chestnut burr fell with a heavy thud, opened, and two glistening, satin skinned nuts rolled out and bade me be conscious of their beauty.

I left the broad view of the hillside and walked slowly along the path through the woods. A milkweed carelessly brushed by my arm left the tiny white parachutes on my sleeve to rebuke me; at a turn in the path the witch

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hazel clicked his warning, then promptly shot his seeds at me; there in the corner the deadly nightshade reached out its berries for me to see; the thornbush held me fast; and the poison ivy, gorgeous and treacherous, spoke to me from the gray walls that bounded the wood lot.

I was surrounded on every side by fruit—fruit large and small, of all sorts and colors. And this hush that I felt, this calm that rested on woodland and hillside, was the deep breath of satisfaction that purpose had been accomplished, effort had been rewarded, hope had been fulfilled, the harvest had come.

Suddenly there flashed into my soul the meaning of it all—I learned. All this rich abundance of fruit of bush and

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vine and tree about me had come from seed! Tiny seeds, so small that scores of them were wrapped up in a nightshade berry, a dozen in one shining apple. And every seed was carefully guarded, protected, safely hidden until the time should come for it to be sown; sown in the earth, to live, grow and bring forth more fruit of the same kind. How that phrase haunted me as I walked out into the open and looked down over the city—"More fruit of the same kind."

Down there in the city over which the soft haze hung low, I could see the fruit of seeds sown long ago in human hearts. There on a hilltop was the hospital—seeds of sympathy and brotherhood had brought forth fruit that was good to see. Down in the val-

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ley toward which I made my way, was the "Children's Home," where, protected from cold and hunger and given "a chance," homeless little ones found happiness. Seed sown deep in a woman's heart had brought forth fruit. Not far away the "Old Ladies' Home" sheltered sweet faces, bent forms and lonely hearts from the world's rough hands.

A boy hurried down the library steps. He was ragged and dirty, but his bright eyes peered eagerly into the book which in the gathering darkness he could not read. The district nurse nodded pleasantly as she hurried along on her errand of mercy. A score of churches reached tall towers toward the first faint stars, and as many school houses stood sturdy, strong and silent—waiting for tomorrow.

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Seed had been sown, had lived, had brought forth fruit, and behold it was good.

If this had been all! But no, the deadly nightshade, the poison ivy, the rag-weed and the thornbush were there. Their seed had been sown and had brought forth fruit which stole men's manhood and broke women's hearts. It was there. Hell's keen edged tool and sharpest weapon with its glaring lights, its mirrors, its rows of bottles, its gaudy trimmings and hidden thorns.

Around the corner in the dark narrow alleys flourished the weeds of ignorance and vice, bringing forth year after year more fruit of the same kind.

In a dimly lighted hall a crowd of men with hard faces listened to the passionate words of hatred of govern-

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ment, rulers, and the social order, that seemed to come from the speaker's soul. Words spoken in a strange tongue, brought forth from seeds of injustice and oppression sown under foreign skies.

The sense of the certainty of the harvest—according to the seed both good and evil—seemed about to overwhelm me when my thoughts returned suddenly to the husbandman driving over the field to gather his pumpkins. It was a face that bore the heavy lines that tell of toil, but it was calm and satisfied.

He was reaping that day what he had sown, and rejoiced in his harvest. He had selected the seed and determined the harvest. He had fought weather and weeds, had triumphed and won the

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fruit with its promise of more of the same kind.

His triumph might be mine. Everything about me said so. I too might select the seed, sow it, toil to make conditions favorable for its growth, patiently wait and in time reap my harvest. Out of all the abundance of seed I must select that which would bring forth the fruit I desired. What did I desire most?

The question hurled itself at me from the air, but I did not answer it, for a cheery voice interrupted my imaginary harvest, by calling my name. It was Hazel pushing in the carriage the small brother she wanted me to see. She was full of the charms of the baby, his joy over the lights in the stores, all he could do and say, and how very unusual he

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was for a baby of his age. As she talked I looked into the tiny face with its big eyes gazing so earnestly out on the puzzling world, and the abundance of seed, good and evil, appalled me as I thought of him. I might select seed for myself. Who would select it for him?

O baby, baby, shall careless hands sow thorns and nightshade in your soul? O baby, can those who love you guard you and keep you free from the deadly parasites and the tares in the night?

The big blue eyes looked up and said, "It shall be as you of the great world choose." And I knew it was so. Those who had given him life had selected much for him; much seed had been already sown, and even now was bear-

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ing fruit; a few years and larger harvests would come.

In time he would enter school and find his way to church, and new areas would open up for more seed. When that time came, I might select it, good seed in great abundance!

I knew what I would choose for him. The seeds of courage, wrapped in the lives of men and women of the ages who had dared all to uphold a cause and save their fellows; the seed which should bring forth a harvest of fearless words and deeds worth while; the seeds of truth, wrapped in earth and stars, in books, in art and science and in the hearts of men; truth which should keep him steady, help him look every man in the face with clear eyes, fearing nothing; the seeds of faith which

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should help him see the truth and through the years lead him to God; the seeds of love, wrapped in song and story, in the souls of fathers and mothers, and most of all in Him who died to show what it means; love, that should make him remember "the other man" and deal justly and generously with him; self-respect, kindness, ambition, hope and scores of other "good seed" which should crowd out the evil, kill it and make him prosperous and happy, I would choose for him.

Looking into the sweet baby face, it seemed almost easy to do. But I remembered that all faces were not like this. Into other and far less promising soil, good seed must find its way. Alas! I had forgotten, the seed was not enough, there must also be the soil. I

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had forgotten that away back there in the first dawn of the spring, the husbandman had prepared the soil.

And a good deal of preparation was necessary. Even in the valley by the brook the soil must be prepared to receive the seed. Much more preparation was needed in the upland, and still more ere the rocky hillside could bring forth even sturdy seeds. Yet from most unpromising soil men have wrung rich harvests.

All over the world are great areas of unpromising soil. The long stretches of swampland, seeming worse than useless—how little they promised the man who dug his trenches, placed his sluices, drained and flooded his land by turns, and finally planted his rice seed, watched, worked, waited and won a harvest.

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The great desert so empty and desolate—how useless it seemed. The fine white dust, the scorching heat, the great mocking cacti, even the lurid sunset, seem to say, “no place here for man.” And yet a few more miles, and the parched soil of the self-same desert, refreshed by living water, welcomed the seed and brought forth a wonderful harvest. Indeed so rich and abundant has the harvest been that men have given millions in money, years of toil and many lives, to lead through almost impassable barriers the streams of water that the waiting soil might be enriched,—prepared.

Just as these apparently worthless stretches of swamp and desert can, when enriched and prepared, welcome good seed and yield a plentiful harvest,

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so the poor waste, desert-like, impoverished, apparently useless soil of human hearts can, when enriched and prepared, welcome the seed and yield the harvest. All nature said it, and I knew it was true.

One thing is needed to bring it all to pass,—some one with eye keen enough to see possibility in the soil, and heart courageous enough to undertake its preparation.

Scores of men saw the desert land of southern Colorado. One believed in its possibility enough to beg the government to at least investigate conditions; two men believed in it enough to take their lives in their hands and go down into the depths of Black Canyon to search for a way by which the river might be turned into that dead valley

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to reclaim it, enrich it, and make it a garden.

The world needs today men and women with keen eyes to see deep into human souls, and strong hearts to cope successfully with great odds. There have been such men and women. By their patronage, encouragement and belief in possibility, they have given the world its artists and musicians, its poets, scientists, preachers and teachers.

Great men have never struggled to greatness alone. Behind them, beside them, have always been the few who believed in their possibilities and sought to supply those conditions under which they might best develop. The men of the early Renaissance needed Petrarch; Michael Angelo needed Lorenzo de Medici; Luther needed

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Germany; Knox needed Scotland; Josef Haydn needed the Prince of Vienna.

Field laid the Atlantic cable, but a score of men believed he could do it, saw the possibilities, and helped him on to achievement. Morse stretched his wires and sent his message; Marconi, without wires, after years of struggle, sent his message over seething billows; and behind each of these stood a little company who saw, understood and believed. Their confidence, their interest and enthusiasm enriched the soil and encouraged the seed until it brought forth a rich harvest.

Among the world's men who have been able to see are Froebel, Pestalozzi and the Arnolds—great teachers who saw so clearly hidden possibilities in

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the children of men that they spent their lives enriching the soil in which these possibilities must develop. The ability to see what others passed unseeing, to enrich and cultivate what others termed "waste," has ever been the secret of humanity's greatest helpers.

At fourteen years of age, William L. Marcy, the "bad boy" of the little Massachusetts town, so powerful in his influence for evil that no one was found able to teach the district school which he attended, seemed pretty poor soil. Every one said he was "bad clear through," "hopeless" and "bound to go to ruin."

One day a new teacher came who said he was not afraid to try the school. Friends were quick to tell him all the stories of "that Marcy boy." All ad-

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vised that he be forbidden to enter the school. The teacher was wise and said nothing. William Marcy came to school. He was allowed to enter. The teacher analyzed the "hopeless" soil, began at once to enrich it with kindness, justice, good will and confidence, watched it carefully, dropping in, as it showed signs of preparation, seeds of ambition, hope and self-respect. The seed took root, developed, grew, and soon began to bear fruit.

William Marcy dropped his bad habits, studied day and night, went to college, and graduated with honors. He studied law, answered the call for men in 1812, became associate justice of the Supreme Court, United States Senator, Governor of New York, and finally Secretary of State. In all these offices

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he served his country with great ability and absolute faithfulness. Hopeless soil, but it responded to enrichment, welcomed good seed and brought forth a worthy harvest, because there was some one with eye keen to see, and heart strong to undertake.

But these keen sighted, strong hearted preparers of the soil and sowers of good seed are not all in the past. Many are living today. Jacob Riis is one. Others passed through Mulberry Bend. He *saw* through it, believed in possibilities even there, knew that weeds must be crowded out, and crowded them out by enriching the soil and sowing strong, sturdy seed. He beheld the harvest and moved on to enrich other soil, and plant more seed which in turn brought forth a harvest of the same kind.

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Jane Addams with intense earnestness studies the soil, and with confidence is daily sowing seed and beholding a harvest good to look upon.

There are scores of others whose names stand out as successful sowers of seeds in human hearts, and hundreds whose names we shall never learn, at work every day and far into the night in every corner of the world, preparing the soil, sowing the seed, and watching with joy the ripening harvest.

If such harvests can be wrested from swamp, desert and waste places in life, there is no limit to what may be done with good soil prepared to welcome good seed and give it abundant nourishment.

There is no limit to the harvest which may be expected if only the sower be

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wise. Ah, that is it—the sower! Upon him rests the responsibility of the harvest. Upon the soil? Yes. And upon the seed? Yes. But upon the sower rests the heavy burden of the harvest; for good seed abounds, he has but to select it; and no soil is hopeless for he may enrich it!

Man's growth in knowledge and power has come about because he has learned to select, to enrich, to determine results in ever enlarging circles of human experience.

Never in the history of the world has there been such a demand for men who can determine results as now. Such men are needed in commercial life, in social life, in every field of education, secular and religious. Such men and women are needed as directors and teachers in the Sunday schools today.

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They are needed to wisely select seed. The world is full of poor seed, the fruition and harvest of which means death. It is also full of good seed which promises much; and of rare seed the harvest of which is the highest type of man.

The task of preparing the soil of human hearts to receive seed, carefully selected, is the greatest work open to men. The weeding process is necessary but it is not enough. The selection of the seed, and the sowing in soil prepared, determines the harvest. This work the Sunday school has undertaken, and in accepting the task it has become a call and a challenge to men of large ability, broad training and real power.

What a variety of soil lies before the average teacher in the Sunday school

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today. When the one short hour allotted him has come, he sees before him children of every race, color and social state.

There in the corner class is a little fellow of ten. He has come in from the street, where after he sold his Sunday papers he matched pennies for an hour and is proud of his gains. He is pale, undersized, anaemic. He lives under the curse of the crowded tenement, tucked in between huge warehouses along the river front. Now, if ever, must the well selected, strong and sturdy seed be sown in him or the weeds, already high, will win in the struggle, and only thorns will meet the harvester.

At the same hour, a short distance across the city, a dozen boys whose parents for various reasons have given

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them to the boarding school, are grouped about the teacher. How different they are! Well nourished and strong, full of life, spirit and ability. Impetuous, wilful, deceitful, as well as honest and fine boys are there. Seed for soil like this, the teacher must select.

There, in a large, prosperous school, a class of girls, with sweet, intelligent, kindly faces, imaginative and earnest, await with eagerness the good seed. Into what rich soil, full of promise, it will find its way. Scattered here and there throughout the school are dishonest girls, rough and noisy ones, weak, foolish and proud ones, without ambition and without aim. Waste land, they are bringing forth thistles—yet waiting for the sowing of good seed.

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Amidst the perplexities of such varied soil, the religious teacher of to-day faces the tremendous question, "In this soil, what seed will grow?" For a moment he stands before that question like the pioneer hushed and silenced by the pathless, unbroken forest, the desolate desert or the impenetrable swamp. And then, stirred by the possibilities there before him, he bends to his work which is worthy the best within him, and prays to the Master of harvests for wisdom for his mighty task. And the answer comes—it always comes.

It comes, as the answer to every heartfelt cry for wisdom and guidance comes, through the use of the faculties the Great Sower has given to his husbandmen. When an eager heart, awakened to need and possibility, cries out

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with intense desire and longing, "What seed shall I sow?" he begins to think as never before. He studies conditions, he uses every moment of time and opens every available door of knowledge. He has begun to answer his own earnest question, and through both success and failure, experience gives him wisdom.

The average teacher, when facing a circle of little faces of all sorts and conditions, has given to him a great package of "good seed" which he is told, if sown, will bring forth a rich, abundant harvest. This package is a Book. The greatest, most wonderful, vital and life-giving Book that the world has ever known. Within its covers he knows there lies the story of man; the mystery of his creation; his fall into sin; his struggle to live and learn. Through its

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pages he may follow man in his progress under Jehovah's guidance; under prophets, priests, judges and kings. In it he may read man's wisest proverbs, his sweetest songs and deepest prayers. And while the wonder of it all steals into his soul, he may read of the sweet, patient mother, the Christ child, the manger where shepherds reverently kneel and magi offer their gifts. He may read of a boy, pure hearted and fine; of a young man strong and splendid; of Gethsemane, Calvary, the stone rolled away in the garden, the cloud, and wondering disciples kneeling outside Jerusalem, gazing up into the heavens; of the birth of the church, its growth and power, and the lives of its leaders; at last he may close the Book

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with the most marvelous imagery of all times and tongues thrilling his soul.

It is such a great Book, so tremendous in its scope, so over-powering in the dignity and significance of its message! And they are so little as they sit with tiny hands holding a penny close, or eyes dancing as they march around the circle to drop it into the shining glass globe. What seed can there be in this Book of books for these little tots in beginners' chairs?

Strange to say, the one great fact of the Great Book belongs to them. The seed is ready for the soil, waiting for the sower. God is "Our Father"—that is it—the simplest and most profound truth in all the Book. How eagerly, and with what confidence they accept it.

A dark-eyed little fellow went home

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from his lesson a few Sundays ago with this great truth impressed so deeply in his mind that at the first opportunity he whispered it to his mother; "I'm not going to be afraid of the dark any more," he said. "God won't let anything hurt me. He is very brave and isn't afraid of anything in all the world; he is stronger than father is, and he takes hold of your hand when it's dark, and you needn't be scared."

That night he went bravely alone up the staircase in the gathering darkness, but the long hall looked darker than ever, and he hesitated. Suddenly his mother, waiting below to see if his courage would hold out, heard a scared little voice say, "God, take hold of my hand." Then footsteps pattered bravely down the hall to the nursery. A tiny hand pushed open the door, and in the joy of

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the light, a jubilant little voice called out, "I'm there, mother."

The sower was wise, and again and again he will sow that seed until in scores of varied forms it will spring up and bear fruit.

The baby Christ who came to tell us that God loves us, every one, grows very dear to child hearts if with wise and careful hand, the sower drops in the seed. Wind, rain and snow, flowers, like the lily in the field, birds, like the tiny sparrows of the east, and lambs carried home in the shepherd's arms bring to little lives the deepest truth religion has to give—that God knows and, like a father, cares.

When they have grown older, have left the circle and sit around the tables holding in their own hands the great

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Book, able to read it in part for themselves, new tasks await the sower. Even more intently must he study the soil, and with more generous, unsparing hand scatter the seed—the right seed.

One year when classes in the public school were choosing seeds for home and school gardens, I learned a lesson in seed sowing which I shall never forget. The seeds came in packages which were placed in boxes, and the children purchased at one cent each, either vegetable or flower seeds as they chose. I noticed that one of the boxes of seed packages was sold in a few days, but no one seemed to care for the packages in the other. I sought the reason, and found that each package in the first box had a picture in color of the flower or fruit which the seed promised. Gay

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poppies, beautiful pansies, candytuft and morning glories blossomed, and huge tomatoes, radishes and curly lettuce grew on those brown paper envelopes. In the second box the packages bore only a description of the seed, printed in small, black type. The whole matter was explained; they had chosen the seed because of the packages; they had purchased it, would sow it in their gardens and it would yield its harvest. And the good seed in the other box lay unsought because wrapped in plain brown paper with the few printed words giving "directions for planting." Since then I have been trying to put the seed I mean to sow in young hearts, into attractive packages. It makes a difference.

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The minds of these children seated about the tables in their cheerful Sunday school room are eager to "know" and able to remember. Now is the one time in all their lives for purely mechanical memory to do its work. They can learn "by heart" the finest words men have ever spoken, and all the storm and stress of the years to come will not efface them. These children are lovers of childhood the world over. Their interest in what other children do and how they live never flags for a moment. And now is the time when the wise sower may drop in the seeds of humanism, of a cosmopolitan interest, of regard for children because they are children, which shall yield a worthy harvest in the years to come.

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Now is the time when children black, brown and yellow, of every nation and tribe, may be lead over the pathway of interest into imagination and memory, where seed may spring up and bear fruit.

Now is the time when seed may be sown, which, bearing fruit in the years to come, shall help them know that,

“All are needed by each one,
Nothing is good or great alone.”

Now is the time when they sing for the joy of singing. Any words will do so far as the singers are concerned, but the wise sower chooses the words, sows them deep in the mind to stay until the sunshine and showers of years awaken them and they bear fruit.

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It is the time for sowing the seed by pictures, stories and songs. But wise is that sower who at this time not only sows the seed but uses every good device for the improvement of the soil.

When they have outgrown the "small chairs" and come into possession of "Junior helps" and "quarterlies," have begun to know and feel their power, to challenge statements and ask perplexing questions, again the wise sower bends every energy to the selection of his seed.

He wraps it now in the lives of heroes who have "dared." He finds Joseph and Moses, Joshua and Daniel, Elijah and the prophets. Yes, Livingstone and Carey, Horace Pitkin and Mary Porter Gamewell speak with power the great truths he is striving to sow in their minds and hearts. He brings to them

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Grenfell and Labrador, Higgins and the lumber camps, and the Christ, who inspired all these and made them what they were and are.

He gives them music which will awaken emotion and stir to action. He makes it possible for them to meet through books and in real life splendid men, and fine women, who have been in the fight for righteousness and have won. With tireless energy he sows, knowing the time of reaping the first real harvest is near.

A few short years, months, days—and in some mysterious way, so gradually that those who love them best cannot tell just when, the boy becomes a young man, his sister a woman.

Happy is the sower who, when that time comes, finds his field white already

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for the first harvest. For then the time has come when, after all the seed sowing, he should expect to hear the calm "I will" of deliberate choice, the choice of best things. He should expect the good seed to bring forth fruit in the form of earnest, honest effort to live rightly, to "do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." It is the time, when, if good seed has been wisely sown, he may expect awakened ambitions, and hearts poured out in altruistic desire to serve the world. It is the time when they listen with intense earnestness to the plea of the Christ as he calls down through the centuries, "Follow me," "Come unto me," and burning with desire to express what can never be expressed, say in answer, "I will follow thee whithersoever thou

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goest." How many sweet, earnest, strong voices have sung,

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear
Lord,

Over mountain, or plain or sea,
I'll say what you want me to say, dear
Lord,

I'll be what you want me to be."

And they mean it—all of it and more.

If this first harvest has been gathered, the husbandman with joy may prepare the soil for the next seed sowing and with hope filling his soul, drop in the seed, which, when it has developed, will mean rich fruit in actual, daily right and generous living; will mean a harvest of men and women who stand unflinchingly for all that is highest and purest in human life, for love, justice and the privilege of sacrifice.

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But what if the seed has been poor, weak, devoid of life-producing power; what if the soil has been left impoverished, unable to nourish the weakly plant which struggled to grow; what if the first harvest be a failure and only tares await the sickle of the reaper?

The only answer is an awful sentence hard to hear, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Whatsoever—good or bad. The boys and girls who persistently sow seeds of evil in their own lives reap what they have sown; it is their harvest—there is no other way.

That father who "sowed his wild oats" is reaping them today in his son. That mother who nursed her own selfishness and weakness is reaping it a hundred fold in her daughter today.

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The teachers, careless and indifferent, who get through the lesson the easiest way, and forget all about the soil and seed when the church door closes, will reap in girls and boys when the crisis comes, what they have sown—nothing less—nothing else.

Who then shall dare attempt the task of sower? Any one who is in earnest. Good seed is plentiful, the soil is everywhere, and skill in preparing the soil and selecting seed may be had if one will work. There is every inducement to work—for “God giveth the increase.”

Hundreds of men and women, great and good, the world around, are what they are because some one sowed seed and God gave the increase. He is doing it today in a thousand ways and places.

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Years ago a young school teacher, discouraged by the poverty of the soil in which she tried to sow good seed, suddenly decided to give up her school and seek a more promising field. That very night a fourteen-year-old boy, whom she had considered hopeless, walked home with her. As he left her he stammered, awkward with the bashfulness of his age, "If you was me, what would you be when you grew up?" Astonished by the suddenness of the question, she asked, "What have you thought of?" "A doctor," said the boy, "if I only could be a doctor."

She had been mistaken in the soil! What seemed "hopeless" was "good," and she determined to stay and sow the seed. She sowed it through Latin and algebra; she rejoiced when he was able

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to enter the academy, wrote him there, loaned him books and saw him grow into fine young manhood.

The year he entered college she married, but she did not forget him. When he received his degree from medical school she was there, and her satisfaction was complete as she saw him plunging into a life of useful service. "You did it," he told her, "you are responsible for all of it." "I sowed, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase," she answered, and smiled.

The years passed; one day her only boy lay very ill. Operation must come, but there was little hope, they told her. Her pupil of the little old school came to her in her hour of need, with skilful hand performed the operation successfully, and never left the child for a mo-

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ment until he could say, "he will live, be comforted."

- It is a wonderful story, but the history of human life is full of just such records of "increase" of seed sown in earnestness and love; and again and again the harvest has proved that there is no hopeless soil.

The Christ taught us that centuries ago in Galilee. O thou patient Christ, sowing in the early morning, in the heat of noontide, and dusk of evening; thou gracious Christ, sowing in hearts of the sinful and the outcast; would that we had thy spirit and thy power! . . .

I wish I were an artist, for if I had skill with brush and colors, I would paint a great truth which words will not paint for me. I should paint it in such wonderful coloring, with feeling

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so intense that the world of teachers would be compelled to study it and understand its meaning.

I should paint it in three parts. In the first section, the prairie reaching out to meet the sky; in the foreground a marvelous machine, a perfect equipment for sowing seed, with a long line of fine horses, two by two, waiting to turn up the sod where the soil lies rich and deep, ready to receive the seed which will drop into the furrow and be covered as the machine moves along. On the seat I should place the driver, with his fine, strong face, on which hope, confidence and joy are written, upturned to the clear, blue sky.

The second section should be but an acre of land with rich, dark soil; in the foreground a single horse attached to the plough; guiding the plough a man

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with his seed bag hanging by his side, and his fine, strong face, on which hope, confidence and joy are written, upturned to the sky over which the soft, gray clouds are stealing.

And the third section should be a field on a rocky hillside with thin, poor soil; in the foreground a man with a seed bag hanging by his side and only a hoe in his hand, but on his fine, strong face, upturned toward dark and threatening skies, I should paint the same hope, confidence and joy.

And as men looked at my completed picture and caught its meaning, words invisible before would appear in the shadows that they might read, "Behold a sower went forth to sow." And if perchance they looked more closely yet, they might read the name of the picture, which is, "The Art of Teaching."

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